So know that

La ilaha illa Allah

—An explanation of its meanings, conditions, and nullfiers

By the Shaykh

Bishr bin Fahd al-Bishr
(فك الله أسره)

5.th Muharram, 1448H

Translator's note:

By the permission of Allah, this material was translated into english —we ask Allah to make it sincerely for His Sake, accept it from us and let it benefit us and everyone it reaches. May Allah reward Shaykh Bishr bin Fahd al-Bishr and free him in the best way, as well as every one of our scholars, brothers and sisters around the world.

Ash-Shaykh Bishr said:

"Therefore, it is the duty of muslims everywhere to work toward spreading the word of Tawḥīd, clarifying it, correcting misunderstandings about it, and explaining that it is a general and comprehensive word that includes beliefs, dealings, acts of worship..."

We ask Allah to make us and you among those who understand the word of Tawḥīd, act upon it, call to it and have sabr on this path — ameen. If you are able to, may Allah have mercy upon you, share it and translate it into other languages.

***

*Note: For a better understanding of the Ayāt, please refer to the Quran itself in arabic as well as tafsir. As for the difference between tawalli and muwālat, please refer to the books of the scholars who have explained this.

This translation was mainly based on the written transcript, therefore one may experience a small difference between the translation and the original audio lecture. For any errors or mistakes in translations: please contact us via instagram **(sunnah.students)**.

Introduction **4**
The reason for creation — Tawḥīd **6**
The mushrikīn of Quraysh knew the meaning of Lā ilāha illā Allāh 7
The Aṣl [foundation] of islam is built upon the two testimonies **8**
The meaning of Lā ilāha illā Allāh 8
This word contains two pillars 9
The call of the Messengers **10**
The three categories of Tawḥīd **11**
The virtues of the word of Tawḥīd **12**
Some of what the word of Tawḥīd contains **14**
Among the necessary requirements of the word of Tawḥīd **16**
The statement of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dawsarī **17**
Sins weaken Tawḥīd **22**
Nullifiers of the word of Tawḥīd **22**
Major shirk 23
Setting up intermediaries 23
Hypocrisy in belief 24
Mockery and ridicule 24
Rejection of the Judgment of Allah 25
A mistaken understanding of the word of Tawḥīd **26**
The right response 27
The conditions of Lā ilāha illā Allāh **28**
The First Condition — ʿIlm [knowledge] 28
The Second Condition — Yaqīn [certainty] 29
The Third Condition — Qabūl [acceptance] 29
The Fourth Condition — Inqiyād [compliance] 30
The Fifth Condition — Sidq [truthfulness] 30
The Sixth Condition — Ikhlās [sincerity] 32
The Seventh Condition — Maḥabbah [love] 32
An additional Condition 33
A refutation of the murji'ah who say that no sin harms imān **34**

Those who oppose the word of Tawḥīd..... 36
The reality of the muslim ummah with regards to the word of Tawḥīd.....38
The statements of Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah.....39

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds. I praise Him (سبحانه) with abundant, good, and blessed praise, as befits the Majesty of His Face and the Greatness of His Sovereignty. I thank Him for His countless favors, and I seek His forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful, for my errors and shortcomings. I seek refuge in His Noble Face from the evils within myself and from the evil consequences of my deeds. May Allah's peace, blessings, and grace be upon His servant and Messenger Muḥammad, and upon all his family and companions.

To proceed:

The basis of this treatise was originally a lecture delivered under the same title, "So know that Lā ilāha illā Allāh" as part of the general Qur'anic lessons that I used to give at Al-Rajhi Mosque in Al-Rabwah in the city of Riyadh. Some brothers suggested printing it so that its benefit might become widespread. One of them thankfully transcribed it from the recording, and I agreed to this and reviewed it again, making the necessary revisions so that it would become suitable for publication. The language of a lecture differs from the language of a written book; nevertheless, there will still remain matters that need further revision, for deficiency is among the characteristics of human beings.

I had wished to write for it a detailed introduction worthy of the importance of the subject, but limited time prevented that. Perhaps Allah the Most Generous, the Bestower, will facilitate writing the hoped-for introduction in a future edition, if Allah wills. How many immense blessings and tremendous favors Allah grants His servants, He makes matters easy for them and fulfills their hopes, and that is easy for Allah.

Our honorable brother, Nayif bin Habib Āl ʻAr Ya'ar, undertook the verification of its hadith references and supervised the stages of its printing; he deserves many thanks. May Allah grant both him and us success in obeying Him, forgive our sins, conceal our faults, and gather us and those we love in the abode of His Divine Generosity. Indeed, He is Near and the Responding One. Allah alone is the One who grants success and aid. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon His servant and Messenger Muḥammad, and upon his family and companions.

Written by: Dr. Bishr bin Fahd al-Bishr // Faculty Member at Imam University

P.O. Box 744 // Riyadh 11643

Lecture begins here

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Indeed, all praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of ourselves and from the evil consequences of our deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can misguide; and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, without partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. May Allah send blessings upon him, his family, his companions, and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment, and grant them abundant peace.

To proceed:

The reason for creation — Tawḥīd

Allah (عز وجل) created creation for no purpose except His worship. He (تعالى) said: **And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me [51:56]**. Thus, the worship of Allah (تعالى) is the foundation, the wisdom, and the ultimate purpose for which creation was brought into existence.

For this reason, **the word of Tawḥīd** —the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** which signifies worshipping Allah alone —became the basis of the call of all the Messengers and the aṣl [foundation] of the religions that Allah (عز وجل) revealed to His servants. It is the aṣl [foundation] and basis of islam. It is the message to which all the Messengers (عليهم الصلاة والسلام) called mankind, and for its Sake Allah (عز وجل) created Paradise and Hellfire. Therefore, it is among what is obligatory upon every Muslim, to understand the meaning of this great word and to act according to its

requirements, so that he may be among those who attain salvation with Allah (تبارك وتعالى).

Hence Allah said to His Prophet ﷺ: **So know, [O Muḥammad], that there is no deity except Allah and ask forgiveness for your sin and for the believing men and believing women. And Allah knows of your movement and your resting place [47:19]**. Knowledge of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, of what it signifies, and of the reality of its meaning is a necessity from among the necessities of life. Without it, a person cannot live a truly happy and wholesome life, nor can he attain success in the Hereafter. Knowledge of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** must be both for belief and for action —not one without the other.

The mushrikīn of Quraysh knew the meaning of Lā ilāha illā Allāh

The Arabs during their jāhiliyyah [pre-islamic ignorance] understood the meaning of **the word of Tawḥīd**. Some knew it, accepted it, and acted according to its requirements, and thus became among the foremost and fortunate believers. Others knew its meaning, yet refused to submit to it and accept it, and so became among the wretched.

For when the Prophet ﷺ came to them and asked them to utter a single word by which the Arabs would submit to them, meaning obey, and through which they would gain authority over the non-Arabs, they said to him, "We will give you ten words". Thereupon, he ﷺ said: "Say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***". They replied: **Has he made the gods [only] one God? Indeed, this is a curious thing [38:5]**.

Thus, they knew the meaning and realized that if they were to say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, their lives would be transformed. They would move from one way of life to another, and their ties, in beliefs and acts of worship, to their former practices would be completely severed.

However, when people's innate linguistic purity became corrupted and understanding of the Arabic language declined, muslims became ignorant of the meaning of **the word of Tawḥīd**. They became ignorant of the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***. As a result, many people began to utter it while in reality nullifying it through their actions and beliefs.

Therefore, it is essential to explain the meaning of this statement, to clarify what it signifies, and to explain what nullifies it, so that the muslim may possess suresightedness regarding his religion —especially in this age in which nations have united against the muslim ummah. It has therefore become necessary for the ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ to re-examine itself and the defects that have harmed it. Most of these defects are from within, while only a small portion comes from external causes.

The Aṣl [foundation] of islam is built upon the two testimonies

1. **The testimony that: *Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** *[There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah]*
2. **The testimony that: *Muḥammadan rasūl Allah*** *[Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah]*

The testimony that ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** means: affirming the oneness of the One who is worshipped and the testimony ***Muḥammadan rasūl Allah*** means: affirming the oneness of the one who is to be followed ﷺ.

We will discuss the first testimony ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** —so whoever bears witness to it, understands its meaning, and acts according to its implications will naturally bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The meaning of the word shahādah in the Arabic language: a decisive statement that proceeds from knowledge and certainty. Thus, **the word of shahādah** contains two matters:

1. **Knowledge and certainty** —and this resides in the heart.
2. **Declaration and proclamation** —and this is the utterance of the tongue, namely speech.

The meaning of *Lā ilāha illā Allāh*

Once the meaning of the word shahādah becomes clear, then the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** means that there is no deity worshipped in truth except Allah (تبارك وتعالى). The word *ilāh* is derived from *alaha, ya'lahu, ilāhatan*, and the meaning of *alaha* in the language is: "to worship". Thus, the *ilāh* is the worshipped and obeyed one whom the hearts deify —meaning they turn to Him, intend Him, submit to Him, humble themselves before Him, and become attached to Him in khashyah [type of fear], inābah [turning back to Allah], love, fear and tawakkul [reliance] upon Him, and having sincerity towards Him (تبارك وتعالى).

So *Lā ilāha illā Allāh* means: There is no deity worshipped in truth except Allah.

Our saying "in truth" excludes those worshipped falsely, namely everyone to whom any type of worship is directed besides Allah (تعالى), and they are many among idols, righteous people, and others. Allah (تعالى) alone deserves worship, and whoever besides Him is worshipped, then that is falsehood. No created being has any right to Ulūhiyyah [Worship of Allah] —neither a near angel nor a sent prophet. **That is because Allah is the Truth, and that which they call upon other than Him is falsehood, and because Allah is the Most High, the Grand [22:62]**.

This word contains two pillars

1. **Negation**
2. **Affirmation**

The negation is our saying "*Lā ilāha"* and the affirmation is our saying "*illā Allāh".* Thus, *"Lā ilāha"* is a negation of everything worshipped besides Allah (تعالى) and *"illā Allāh"* is an affirmation of all types of worship for Allah, the Lord of the worlds, alone without partner in His worship, just as He has no partner in His dominion and Lordship. Thus, it contains barā'ah [disavowal] of everything worshipped besides Allah (تبارك وتعالى) and it contains realization of worship to Allah alone.

The meaning of this tremendous word has come in many verses of the Book of Allah. Allah ta'ala said: **And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid ṭāghūt". And among them were those whom Allah guided, and among them were those upon whom error was [deservedly] decreed. So proceed through the earth and observe how was the end of the deniers [16:36]**.

Thus, His Saying (تعالى): "Worship Allah" is the meaning of His Saying "illā Allāh" and His Saying: "and avoid ṭāghūt" is the meaning of His Saying "Lā ilāha". And He (تعالى) said: **And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, "There is no deity except Me, so worship Me".[21:25]**. And He (تعالى) said: **So whoever disbelieves in ṭāghūt and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing [2:256]**.

So His Saying (جل وعلا): "So whoever disbelieves in ṭāghūt" is the meaning of "*Lā ilāha"* and His Saying "and believes in Allah" is the meaning of "*illā Allāh".* Thus it conveys the same meaning as ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***.

Likewise, He (تعالى) said: **But those who have avoided ṭāghūt, lest they worship it, and turned back to Allah - for them are good tidings. So give good tidings to My servants –Who listen to speech and follow the best of it. Those are the ones Allah has guided, and those are people of understanding [39:17-18]**.

And He (تعالى) said: **And they were not commanded except to worship Allah , [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and to give zakah. And that is the correct religion [98:5]**.

And His Saying: "And they were not commanded except to worship Allah" is the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** because His Saying "and they were not commanded except" is a restriction of worship so that it is purely for Allah, Lord of the worlds. This is emphasized by His Saying: "sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth". And the meaning of ḥunafā' (inclining to truth) is: inclining away from shirk toward Tawḥīd.

The call of the Messengers

Indeed, every messenger Allah (عز وجل) sent, from when He sent Nūḥ until He sent the final one of them, Muḥammad ﷺ, said to his people: **Worship Allah ; you have no deity other than Him [11:50]**. So it is the first thing that the messengers call their people to —even though the messages of the prophets also include the rest of the beliefs, acts of worship, and other matters. That is why we find that Shuʿayb (عليه السلام) called to worshipping Allah alone, and then forbade them from cheating in measurement and weight. Likewise, all the prophets (عليهم السلام) called to the sincere devotion of worship to Allah alone, and to taking the commands and prohibitions from Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

The three categories of Tawḥīd

The word of Tawḥīd encompasses all categories of Tawḥīd:

- Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah [Oneness of Worship]
- Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah [Oneness of Lordship]
- Tawḥīd al-Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt [Oneness of Names and Attributes]

Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah [Oneness of Worship] is included by mutābaqah [direct correspondence] —meaning it encompasses it completely. The indication of mutabaqah means: a word indicating the entirety of what it was originally coined to mean in the Arabic language.

As for Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah [Oneness of Worship] and Tawḥīd al-Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt [Oneness of Names and Attributes], they are included by taḍammun [implication]. The indication of implication means: the indication of a word upon part of its meaning, just as the word "human being" indicates some of his limbs. Thus, Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah [Oneness of Worship], also called Tawḥīd al-'Ibādah, is the Oneness of Allah (تبارك وتعالى) in the actions of His servants; meaning that the servants devote all forms of worship to their Lord, free and sincere for Him alone, without associating any partner with Him.

Worship is the exclusive right of Allah (تعالى); no share of it belongs to anyone —neither to the nearest angels, nor to the sent prophets, nor to the righteous allies, nor to other than them. Worship, in terms of what Allah has commanded, is a comprehensive term for everything Allah loves and is pleased with, from among sayings and actions —both apparent and hidden. Thus, it includes all matters of life.

For this reason, Allah (تعالى) said to His Prophet ﷺ: **Say, "Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds [6:162]**. Therefore, all of life, and everything after it, is for Allah (تبارك وتعالى). A muslim must proceed through it sincerely devoted to his Lord (سبحانه). As for Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah, it is the Oneness of Allah in His actions —such as dominion, creation, and governance. This type was affirmed by the mushrikīn to whom the Prophet ﷺ was sent, and who lived in his time. However, Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah [Oneness of Worship] was not affirmed by them, as will be clarified in Shaa Allah. Therefore, Allah (تعالى) said: **And if you asked them who created them, they would surely say "Allah" [43:87]**. **And if you should ask them, "Who has created the heavens and the earth?" they would surely say, "They were created by the Exalted in Might, the Knowing" [43:9]**.

Thus, Allah informs us that the mushrikīn in the time of the Prophet ﷺ acknowledged His Lordship (سبحانه) but they differed regarding Ulūhiyyah —that is, in singling out Allah alone in all acts of worship. As for Tawḥīd al-Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt, it is affirming what Allah (عز وجل) has affirmed for Himself, and what His Messenger ﷺ has affirmed for Him, from the Most Beautiful Names and the Lofty Attributes, without taḥrīf [distortion], ta'ṭīl [negation], takyīf [asking how], or tamthīl [likening], in accordance with His Saying: There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing [42:11].

The virtues of the word of Tawḥīd

This word, **the word of Tawḥīd**, has immense virtues. The scholar Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Sa'dī summarized these virtues in his commentary on *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*. I will mention a summary of what he said. He (رحمه الله) said regarding Tawḥīd —and what he said about Tawḥīd applies to **the word of Tawḥīd**:

(Begin quote) Tawḥīd is the greatest obligation upon all servants. Nothing possesses beneficial effects and diverse virtues like Tawḥīd —indeed, the goodness of this world and the Hereafter is from the fruits and virtues of Tawḥīd.

1. Among its virtues is that it is the greatest cause for the forgiveness of sins and their expiation.

2. Among its virtues is that it is the greatest means for relieving the hardships of this world and the Hereafter and warding off their punishments.

3. Among its greatest benefits is that it prevents eternal residence in the Fire if there exists in the heart even the weight of a mustard seed of it —and if Tawḥīd is perfected in the heart, it prevents entry into the Fire altogether.

4. Among its virtues is that its possessor attains complete guidance and perfect security in this world and the Hereafter.

5. Among its virtues is that the happiest of people with the intercession of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "whoever says **Lā ilāha illā Allāh** sincerely from their hearts" [Bukhari].

6. Among them is that all outward sayings as well as outward and inward actions depend for their acceptance, perfection, and the attainment of reward upon Tawḥīd. The stronger the Tawḥīd and sincerity to Allah (جل وعلا) the more complete these matters become.

7. Among them is that it makes it easy for the servant to perform good deeds and abandon evil deeds, and it consoles him in times of affliction. The one who is sincere to Allah in his imān [faith] and Tawḥīd finds acts of obedience light upon him due to the reward he hopes for, and abandoning sins becomes easy for him due to what he fears of Allah's displeasure and punishment.

8. Among them is that Tawḥīd lightens hardships for the servant and makes pains easier to bear. According to the perfection of a servant's Tawḥīd and imān [faith], his reception of hardships and pains is with an open heart, a tranquil soul, and submission and contentment with Allah's painful decrees.

9. Among its greatest virtues is that it frees the servant from the bondage of created beings, from attachment to them, from fear of them, from hoping in them, and from acting for their sake. This is true honor and lofty nobility. At the same time, he becomes devoted to Allah, worshipping Him alone, hoping in none but Him, fearing none but Him, and turning to none but Him. In this way, his success is perfected and his salvation is realized.

10. Among them is that when it is perfected in the heart with complete sincerity, it turns small deeds into something great, and multiplies actions and sayings beyond limit or reckoning.

11. Among them is that Allah (جل وعلا) has guaranteed for the people of Tawḥīd victory and triumph in this world along with honor and dignity, attainment of guidance, facilitation toward ease, the rectification of their conditions, and right guidance in their words and deeds.

12. Among them is that Allah (جل وعلا) defends the muwaḥidīn, the people of imān [faith], protecting them from the evils of this world and the Hereafter, and bestowing upon them a good life, tranquility toward Him, and tranquility through His remembrance.

The evidences for these points from the Qur'an and the Sunnah are numerous and well known. *(End quote)*.

Some of what the word of Tawḥīd contains

Just as the word **Lā ilāha illā Allāh** encompasses all categories of Tawḥīd, it must also be known that it negates all forms of shirk, whether small or great, apparent or hidden. It also necessitates disbelief in whatever is worshipped besides Allah (تعالى). Imān is not complete nor even valid in its aṣl [foundation], except through that. Allah (تعالى) said: **So whoever disbelieves in ṭāghūt and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold [2:256]**. Moreover, the phrase **Lā ilāha illā Allāh** includes a significant and important matter that muslims must be aware of, especially in this age: it contains the principle that legislation and Hākimiyyah [Allah's exclusive right to legislate and judge] belong solely to Allah (تبارك وتعالى). This is included within all three categories of Tawḥīd. Its inclusion in Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah [Oneness of Worship] is because Allah is the One worshipped and obeyed; and the worshipped One is the One who commands and forbids.

For this reason, some of the mufassirīn [scholars of tafsīr] said regarding Allah's Saying: **And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me [51:56]**. That it means: "except that I command them and forbid them". This opinion was chosen by Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله). Its inclusion in Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah is because tashri' [legislation] and hukm [judgment] are among the acts of Allah and part of His management of creation. He alone is distinguished by this. For this reason, Allah has deemed whoever takes a musharri' [legislator] besides Him, to be a mushrik. Allah (تعالى) said: **Or have they other deities who have ordained for them a religion to which Allah has not consented? [42:21]**.

And He said: **And do not eat of that upon which the name of Allah has not been mentioned, for indeed, it is grave disobedience. And indeed do the devils inspire their allies [among men] to dispute with you. And if you were to obey them, indeed, you would be associators [of others with Him] [6:121]**.

And He said: **They have taken their scholars and monks as lords besides Allah [9:31]**. This verse was revealed concerning Jews and Christians who obeyed their rabbis and monks, meaning their scholars, in declaring lawful what Allah had forbidden and forbidding what Allah had made lawful. Thus, Allah deemed them as having taken them as lords besides Allah. **And they were not commanded except to worship one God; there is no deity except Him. Exalted is He above whatever they associate with Him [9:31]**. And whoever acts as they did shares their ruling.

As for its inclusion in Tawḥīd al-Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt, Allah's Names include Al-Malik [the King] and Al-Hakam [the Judge] and to Him belongs al-Mulk [dominion] and al-Hukm [judgment/legislation]. because of that, the Prophet ﷺ changed the kunya of a man called Abi al-Ḥakam and named him Abi Shurayḥ, explaining that Allah is al-Ḥakam and to Him belongs al-Hukm [judgment/legislation] [Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, al-Bayhaqi, and al-Hakim].

Allah (تعالى) said: **And in anything over which you disagree - its ruling is [to be referred] to Allah [42:10]**. And He said: **His is the judgement, and to Him you will be returned [28:88]**. And He said: **Legislation is not but for Allah. He has commanded that you worship not except Him [12:40]**. And He said: **and He shares not His legislation with anyone [18:26]**. Further clarification of this point will come, if Allah wills, when discussing some nullifiers of **the word of Tawḥīd.**

Among the necessary requirements of the word of Tawḥīd

The word of Tawḥīd necessitates muwālāt [loyalty] to the allies of Allah and mu'ādāt [enmity] toward the enemies of Allah. It has necessitated love for the believers and hatred for the disbelievers. This is an aṣl [foundation] from among the usūl [foundations] of imān [faith]. Rather, some scholars have said that Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) has not mentioned in the Qur'an, after commanding Tawḥīd and forbidding its opposite which is shirk, anything more frequently than the prohibition of allying muwālāt [loyalty] oneself with the disbelievers.

Therefore, whoever allies himself with the disbelievers falls into a great danger that is close to reaching the level of tawalli [loyalty], meaning making tawalli of the kuffar and thereby nullifying one's Tawḥīd —we ask Allah for well-being. As for muwālāt that does not reach the level of tawallī, it is a major sin that diminishes Tawḥīd but does not amount to its nullification. Allah has indeed commanded us to show muwālāt [loyalty] to the believers, as He (تعالى) said: **The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them [9:71]**.

And our Lord (جل وعلا) warned us against allying muwālāt [loyalty] with disbelievers, so He (تعالى) said: **O you who have believed, do not take My enemies and your enemies as allies, extending to them affection while they have disbelieved in what came to you of the truth [60:1]**. Allah (عز وجل) has thus clarified the reason for their enmity: that they disbelieved in the truth that has come to us. This includes their disbelief in **Lā ilāha illā Allāh**. When they rejected it, enmity toward them became obligatory, hatred toward them became obligatory, and separation from them became obligatory, and it became forbidden for muslims

to show them loyalty or to extend to them any form of affection or love. In light of what has preceded, it becomes clear to us that all acts of obedience —indeed the entire religion of islam —are among the requirements of the statement of Tawḥīd —the word of **Lā ilāha illā Allāh**.

It also becomes clear that all affairs of life must be in accordance with the requirements of **Lā ilāha illā Allāh**. Thus it is a word that encompasses all of life, so it is a complete, integrated methodology. It shows us the correct path in action, and it shows us the correct path in economics, politics, media, education, and upbringing. Every matter of life falls under the word of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***; thus it is included in its meaning and implications. Therefore, whoever claims that there are aspects of life that fall outside the requirements of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and outside islam, and that are not governed by the shar' [legislation] of Allah (تبارك وتعالى) then his saying is disbelief in Allah (عز وجل), because it is a fabrication falsely ascribed to Allah and His Messenger. Therefore, whoever says that there is no religion in politics and no politics in religion has invalidated the statement ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***.

The statement of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dawsarī

How excellent is what Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dawsarī (رحمه الله) said:

(Begin quote) The word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** is entirely "politics" from its lām [beginning letter] to its hā' [ending letter]. *(End quote)*

And he (رحمه الله) asked himself in a booklet of his titled *Al-Ajwibah al-Mufīdah li-Muhimmāt al-ʿAqīdah*: 'How can we respond to someone who says that religion is only a relationship between a servant and his Lord, and has nothing to do with politics and ḥukm [governance]?'

The Shaykh (رحمه الله) said:

(Begin quote) This is a strategy adopted by those who rebelled against the Church in Europe, which did not possess a comprehensive legislative legacy sufficient for the methods of political governance in line with proper development. This approach was then adopted by Western-educated students among our own people, who worked to implement it in muslim lands and impose it upon them through strong indoctrination from their teachers and with colonial support enjoyed by agents and those with ulterior motives who seek dominion over the remnants of islam and the containment of its followers. The colonizers and missionaries were relieved by the implementation of this plan, through which they removed the rule of Allah and displaced muslims from the teachings and ethics of their shari'ah. They colored them with a Western hue in their customs, beliefs, morals, and clothing, until, by means of this scheme and under its various slogans, they transformed them into a type of people neither truly Eastern nor truly Western. Although this is, in relation to islam and muslims, a grave slander and sinful scheme.

In reality, it is a decisive argument against those people —one that utterly crushes and humiliates them. For the servant's relationship with his Lord must be comprehensive in all matters. He must not walk except according to His law, not judge except by His Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet, not move except seeking His pleasure and avoiding His wrath, and not love or hate except for His Sake —not for personal benefit, tribalism, nationality, kinship, or wealth. He should not show loyalty or enmity except for the Sake of Allah and for the purpose of raising the Word of Allah, not for any other motive.

He must not ally with Allah's enemies nor oppose His allies for personal interests or for any of the previously mentioned motives. Nor should he devise or implement systems of governance based on those opportunistic principles, casting the Book of Allah, His Tawḥīd, and His shari'ah behind his back. If he does that, then he has not maintained a proper relationship with his Lord; rather, he has severed it.

He becomes, in his claim, a liar and sinful transgressor, because Allah (تعالى) is not pleased that His servant should rule by other than His shari'ah, or that he abandons the call to islam and the defense of all muslim causes, or that he allies with Christians under the pretext of nationalism or fanatical ethnic loyalty imported from Europe, thereby abandoning the millah of Ibrahīm (عليه السلام). Likewise, Allah is not pleased for His servant to live with an unarmed imān in the face of armed disbelief and atheism. Rather, in order to realize sincerity and truthfulness to Him, he should prepare himself against the enemies of Allah with every means of power and strength available to him, however varied and advanced they may become, so that he may subdue them, lest they overcome him and gain control over his destiny.

He likewise obligates upon him to be protective of His sacred limits, safeguarding His boundaries, and supportive of His religion, pushing it forward. His worship must not be restricted to one type while neglecting another, nor should he fall short in ghazw [striving] to spread the truth, such that the enemies of Allah overwhelm him with falsehood. If he does not do so, then he has not maintained a proper relationship with his Lord, and he becomes treacherous and sinful. For his relationship with his Lord encompasses all affairs: military and peaceful matters, economic and social matters, and every form of conduct alike —in the mosque, the office, the factory, and the marketplace. *(End quote)*

Then he asked himself: 'What is the shar'i and rational evidence for this?'

And the question-and-answer method makes matters easier for beginner students

He (رحمه الله) answered:

(Begin quote) The textual evidences are numerous and recurrent. Among them is that Allah (تعالى) has commanded worship of Him in a general sense and the meanings and requirements of worship are numerous and great. No one is

permitted to exempt himself from them except with a shar'i proof. All religious and worldly matters which Allah has obligated upon His creation in the Qur'an, or encouraged and urged them toward, He has connected to piety and adherence to His limits —even in matters of inheritance and debt. Allah (تعالى) said: **These are the limits [set by] Allah [4:13]**. And He said: **So let him write and let the one who has the obligation dictate. And let him fear Allah, his Lord, and not leave anything out of it [2:282]**.

And He (سبحانه) said regarding the marriage of women, marital companionship with them, and their divorce: **And fear Allah and know that you will meet Him [2:223]**. And He said: **And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him [2:235]**. And He said: **A provision according to what is acceptable - a duty upon the righteous [2:241]**. And He said: **These are the limits of Allah, so do not transgress them [2:229]**.

And in charity He said: **As for he who gives and fears Allah [92:5]**.

And in political matters He said: **And do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors [5:87]**. **And act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly [49:9]**. **Be persistently standing firm in justice [4:135]**. **And do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness [5:8]**. **O you who have believed, take your precaution [4:71]**. **O you who have believed, do not take as intimates those other than yourselves, for they will not spare you [any] ruin [3:118]**. **O you who have believed, do not take My enemies and your enemies as allies [60:1]**. **O you who have believed, do not make allies of a people with whom Allah has become angry [60:13]**. **O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies [5:51]**. The verses concerning political matters are numerous and varied.

With regards to military affairs for the support of ʻaqīdah and establishing the authority of Allah and elevating His Word, Allah says: **And fight in the cause of Allah [2:244]**. **Not equal are those believers remaining [at home] - other than the disabled - and the mujahideen, [who strive and fight] in the cause of Allah [4:95]**. **Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah , and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of ṭāghūt [4:76]**. (....) **O you who have believed, be supporters of Allah [61:14]. If you support Allah , He will support you [47:7]**. *(End quote)*

And so on regarding everything he mentioned (رحمه الله). Then he (رحمه الله) said: 'What religion commands strength and combines warfare and worship at the same time except the religion of the muslims?'

(Begin quote) Indeed Allah said to them as a warning: **Those who disbelieve wish that you would neglect your weapons and your baggage so they could come down upon you in one [single] attack [4:102]**. (...) **But take precaution. Indeed, Allah has prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment [4:102]**.

And regarding loyalty and alliance, He forbade His servants from taking, besides Him and besides their believing brothers, any walījah [intimate ally] from other people. And in matters of transactions, He said: **O you who have believed, fulfill [all] contracts [5:1]**. **And do not deprive people of their due and do not commit abuse on earth, spreading corruption [26:183]**. **Woe to those who give less [than due] [83:1]**. **And take witnesses when you conclude a contract. Let no scribe be harmed or any witness [2:282]**. (...) And many other social matters as well. In Sūrat al-Nūr and Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt there are clear verses, but we will not prolong the discussion with them. And in the Prophetic hadiths there are seas (of narrations) that deter from such matters.

The essence of all that has preceded is His Saying (تعالى): **So invoke Allah , [being] sincere to Him in religion, although the disbelievers dislike it [40:14]. O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him] [3:102]**. (End of Quote)

It is as though he is indicating that everything mentioned is included within the religion which must be made sincerely for Allah (تبارك وتعالى). In this regard, the eminent scholar Shaykh Muḥammad al-Shanqīṭī (رحمه الله) has a lecture on the perfection of the Sharīʿah that was published as a booklet, in which he set out the evidence that the Sharīʿah encompasses all matters, including politics, economics, upbringing, education, and other fields.

Sins weaken Tawḥīd

And it should be known that every violation and every sin that a person commits deliberately diminishes and weakens their Tawḥīd unless they repent from it. This explains many acts of disobedience and why a person benefits so little from admonitions and knowledge: Tawḥīd has become weak in the heart. When Tawḥīd becomes weak in the heart, a person becomes bold in disobeying Allah's command and in doing what Allah, the Mighty and Exalted, has forbidden.

Nullifiers of the word of Tawḥīd

The muslim should also know that **the word of Tawḥīd** has nullifiers that invalidate the islam of the one who commits them. Merely pronouncing and repeating **the word of Tawḥīd** will not benefit a person as long as they contradict it through their actions. This is like someone who wishes to pray and performs wuḍū' [ablution], but then breaks that wuḍū' [ablution] afterward. His previous wuḍū' [ablution] no longer benefits him; rather, he must perform wuḍū' [ablution] again.

Major shirk

Among the most important nullifiers of the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** is major shirk [associating partners with Allah (عز وجل) in any of its forms. Associating partners with Allah by calling upon the dead or the absent, seeking their aid, and asking from them things that none can provide except the Lord of all creation (عز وجل) —is shirk. Likewise, sacrificing animals for them, making vows to them, circumambulating their graves, and kissing them as acts of seeking blessing and drawing nearer to them —all of this falls under major shirk, which removes its perpetrator from the fold of islam —we ask Allah for safety and well-being.

Setting up intermediaries

Likewise, appointing intermediaries between Allah and His servants. What is meant by intermediaries here is that a person calls upon someone and asks that person to intercede for him with Allah, whether that person is among the dead or absent. This is shirk against Allah (عز وجل) and this is the shirk of the people of the jāhiliyyah [pre-islamic ignorance], the shirk of Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab who said: **We only worship them that they may bring us nearer to Allah in position [39:3]**. They did not worship them because they created anything or provided sustenance. Rather, they worshipped them because they claimed that these beings would intercede for them and bring them closer to Allah.

And those who take protectors besides Him [say], "We only worship them that they may bring us nearer to Allah in position" [39:3]. **And they worship other than Allah that which neither harms them nor benefits them, and they say, "These are our intercessors with Allah" [10:18]**. Therefore, whoever calls upon a dead person or someone who is absent, or asks such a person to intercede with Allah on his behalf, has committed an act of major shirk, because this implies that the person being called upon knows of the

supplication, hears it, responds to it, and is capable of bringing benefit or averting harm. Thus, he has attributed to that person qualities that belong exclusively to Allah (تبارك وتعالى).

Hypocrisy in belief

Among the nullifiers of **the word of Tawḥīd** is also nifāq iʿtiqādī [hypocrisy in belief] —may Allah protect us from it. Some scholars have explained its various forms. Among the forms of nifāq iʿtiqādī [hypocrisy in belief], as explained by the scholar and reformer Muḥammad ibn Abdul-Wahhāb, is hatred of the Prophet ﷺ or hatred of some part of what he brought. Another form of nifāq iʿtiqādī [hypocrisy in belief], is feeling pleased by the decline of islam and rejoicing in it, and feeling saddened when islam is victorious and rises in strength. This explains the prevalence of nifāq iʿtiqādī [hypocrisy in belief] in our time. We see that when islam is defeated or falls behind in some place, many magazines and newspapers published in Europe are pleased; but when islam is victorious and rises, they show signs of sorrow and disappointment at what has occurred. This, he says, is hypocrisy in belief —may Allah protect us from it. Allah (تعالى) said to His Prophet ﷺ: **If good befalls you, it distresses them; but if disaster strikes you, they say, "We took our matter [in hand] before," and turn away while they are rejoicing [9:50]**. This has been the way of the hypocrites, both in ancient times and in the present.

Mockery and ridicule

Among the nullifiers of **the word of Tawḥīd** is mocking and ridiculing Allah, His Messenger, or His āyāt, even if the person who mocks or ridicules is doing so jokingly. Matters of belief are not subjects for joking —rather, they are matters of seriousness and for this reason, Allah said:

And if you ask them, they will surely say, "We were only conversing and playing". Say, "Is it Allah and His verses and His Messenger that you were mocking?". Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief [9:65-66]. Whether this mockery is expressed verbally, in the pages of newspapers and magazines, or in any other way; whoever mocks Allah, His Messenger, or His verses, even by means of a gesture —then he is an apostate, We ask Allah for well-being and safety.

Rejection of the Judgment of Allah

Among the nullifiers of the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** is rejecting the judgment of Allah and His Messenger, and making taḥākum to other than them and instead to man-made laws of jāhiliyyah [pre-islamic ignorance]. These are the laws by which muslims in this era have been afflicted, and which were imposed by the disbelieving colonial powers when they took control over most muslim lands. They did not leave these lands except after imposing ruling by european laws after removing the islamic shari'ah from authority. They only departed the lands of the muslims after placing within them agents loyal to their principles.

As one of the islamic thinkers said: "The red English left, but the black English remained". Meaning that the English, with their soldiers, withdrew from the muslim lands they had colonized, and likewise the French and others. However, those who speak our language and share our appearance remained —yet they are more hostile to islam and muslims than those disbelieving Christians. They rejected the judgment of Allah and His Messenger, and they enacted constitutions based on man-made laws, giving them articles and references by which judgments are made. In this way, islamic law was pushed aside from governance in muslim lands except where Allah willed otherwise.

They permitted what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ made unlawful, and prohibited what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ made lawful, until it reached the

point that some of them even prohibited fasting during the daytime of Ramadan under the pretext of work. In some countries whose people speak Arabic, it is forbidden for a man to marry two women. If a man is found with two wives, it becomes a major crime for which he is prosecuted by law. Yet if he is found with twenty prostitutes, no one objects and the law protects him. Is this not greater than what the scholars of the Jews and Christians did when they made lawful what Allah forbade and forbade what Allah made lawful? These people imposed it (man-made laws) by force, compelling muslims to abide by it and making them resort to it for judgment. Indeed, even if no one came to them, they would still go after him.

This is among the greatest nullifiers of the statement of Tawḥīd; it is major disbelief that takes a person out of the fold of islam, as the scholars (رحمهم الله) have stated, such as Imam al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr when he spoke about the Tatars in his Tafsīr and in his historical work *Al-Bidāyah wal-Nihāyah*. This was also explicitly affirmed by the eminent scholar Abdur-Rahmān ibn Hasan Āl al-Shaykh (رحمه الله) by the eminent scholar and leading authority of his time Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh in his treatise *Taḥkīm al-Qawānīn*, by the eminent scholar Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Shanqīti in his Qur'anic commentary *Adwa' al-Bayan*, by the eminent scholar Ahmad Shākir (رحمه الله) and by many others besides them.

Those who do this are among the heads of the ṭawāghīt, as was explained by Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (رحمه الله) when he spoke about the heads of the ṭawāghīt. Allah (تعالى) said: **Have you not seen those who claim to have believed in what was revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], and what was revealed before you? They wish to refer legislation to ṭāghūt, while they were commanded to reject it; and Satan wishes to lead them far astray. And when it is said to them, "Come to what Allah has revealed and to the Messenger," you see the hypocrites turning away from you in aversion [4:60-61]**.

If one who seeks judgment from the ṭāghūt knowingly and with satisfaction is considered a disbeliever, then what of the ṭāghūt itself? —the one who imposes rulings that contradict the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, enforces and imposes them in the courts of the muslims such that they judge between them. Such a person is far more severe in disbelief and much more wicked than the former one.

A mistaken understanding of the word of Tawḥīd

Some people may say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, yet then do things that contradict it, claiming that merely by uttering it he has become safe from committing shirk with Allah (تبارك وتعالى) as well as disbelief. Others think that if they say **the word of Tawḥīd**, believe in it, and then commit sins, those sins cannot harm them. Meaning, they believe that if they do not invalidate **the word of Tawḥīd**, then even if they commit sins that do not take a person out of islam, this will not harm them. They base this view on certain hadiths indicating that whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** will enter Paradise, such as the hadith of Abu Hurairah in which the Prophet ﷺ said to him: "Whomever you meet beyond this wall who testifies that ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** with his heart certain of it, then give him glad tidings of Paradise" [Muslim].

Also among these is the Prophet's ﷺ statement in the hadith of Muadh: "The right of the servants upon Allah is that He will not punish one who dies without associating anything with Him" [Bukhari & Muslim]. And in the hadith of 'Itbān bin Malik: "Indeed, Allah has forbidden the Fire for whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** seeking thereby the Face of Allah" [Bukhari & Muslim]. Both of these hadiths are authentic and are found in the two Ṣaḥīḥ collections and elsewhere.

The right response

The scholars have responded to this issue, that is; the ruling concerning a person who utters this statement and then does things that nullify it, in several ways. Among them is that it is a matter firmly established in the religion of the muslims that not everyone who says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** is automatically considered among those who are saved and protected from shirk. For indeed, the hypocrites during the time of the Prophet ﷺ used to say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** yet inwardly they were associating partners with Allah (عز وجل). Examples include Abdillah bin Ubayy bin Salūl and others like him. Allah (تعالى) said: **Indeed, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire - and never will you find for them a helper [4:145]**. **When the hypocrites come to you, [O Muḥammad], they say, "We testify that you are the Messenger of Allah". And Allah knows that you are His Messenger, and Allah testifies that the hypocrites are liars [63:1]**.

The conditions of Lā ilāha illā Allāh

Thus it has become clear that a person may utter **the word of Tawḥīd** while, in reality, being a mushrik —concealing disbelief and outwardly displaying islam. Allah (عز وجل) and His Messenger ﷺ have clarified that **the word of Tawḥīd** has conditions which must be fulfilled by the one who utters it in order for him to be among those who attain salvation with Allah (عز وجل). The scholars have mentioned that these conditions are seven.

The First Condition — ʻIlm [knowledge]

The first condition is knowledge of its meaning, both in negation and affirmation —that is, knowledge that negates ignorance in its meaning. For this reason Allah (تعالى) said: **So know, [O Muḥammad], that there is no deity except Allah**

[47:19]. And He (سبحانه) said: **But only those who testify to the truth [can benefit], and they know [43:86]**. Thus, knowledge is essential. If a person pronounces it while not knowing its meaning, he is not thereby saved nor is he a Muslim. Even if a non-Arab disbeliever, whether Christian, Jewish, Magian, or otherwise, hears someone say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** in Arabic and repeats it, he would not thereby become a muslim until he knows its meaning, believes in it, and acts according to what it necessitates.

And regarding the Saying of Allah (تعالى): **But only those who testify to the truth [can benefit], and they know [43:86]**. Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنهما) explained it by saying: *except those who bear witness to the truth*, meaning ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, *while they know* —that is, they know what it indicates. And the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever dies knowing that ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** will enter Paradise" [Muslim & Ahmad]. And ignorance of its meaning is what caused many people to fall into shirk, as they were ignorant of the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***.

They were unaware that the meaning of the "Ilāh" and that the "Ilāh" is the one who is worshipped, and they were ignorant of the meaning of negation and affirmation contained in it —unlike the earlier mushrikīn such as Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab and others like them, who actually knew its meaning, which is why they rejected it when the Prophet ﷺ called them to it, saying: **Has he made the gods [only] one God? Indeed, this is a curious thing" [38:5]**. And they said to one another: **Continue, and be patient over [the defense of] your gods. Indeed, this is a thing intended [38:6]**. Those people knew the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, but they rejected it and refused it. As for these others, they were ignorant of its meaning, So they worshipped graves, devoted themselves to them, made vows to their occupants, slaughtered for them, and invoked them besides Allah (تبارك وتعالى) thus they have departed from the meaning of **the word of Tawḥīd**.

The Second Condition — Yaqīn [certainty]

The second condition is that a person should say it with certainty, so that his heart is firmly convinced of it and he believes in the truth of what he is saying. The opposite of certainty is doubt, uncertainty, hesitation, and guesswork. Allah (تعالى) said: **The believers are only the ones who have believed in Allah and His Messenger and then doubt not [49:15]**. And the Prophet ﷺ said in the authentic hadith: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah; no servant meets Allah with these two while not doubting them except that he enters Paradise" [Muslim]. Allah (تعالى) said regarding the hypocrites: **And whose hearts have doubted, and they, in their doubt, are hesitating [9:45]**. So whoever says it while doubting its truth is thereby a disbeliever, we ask Allah for well-being and safety, because imān is firm conviction.

The Third Condition — Qabūl [acceptance]

The third condition is that a person should say it while accepting it, and acceptance is the opposite of rejection —meaning he does not reject any of its meanings. For a person may know the meaning of the two testimonies and may be certain of what they indicate, yet he rejects them out of arrogance and envy. This is like the Jewish rabbis, regarding whom Allah (عز وجل) said: **Many of the People of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves [even] after the truth has become clear to them [2:109]**. Likewise, the leaders of the mushrikīn knew the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and they knew the truthfulness of the Prophet ﷺ, yet they arrogantly refused to accept the truth and guidance. Allah (تعالى) said regarding them: **Indeed they, when it was said to them, "*Lā ilāha illā Allāh*" were arrogant [37:35]**. And He said: **And indeed, they do not call you untruthful, but it is the verses of Allah that the wrongdoers reject [6:33]**.

And those like them in this time are those who know the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and believe in its truth, yet do not accept it; rather, they reject it and refuse it.

The Fourth Condition — Inqiyād [compliance]

The fourth condition is that a person should comply with it, submit to it, and fully yield to it. Some scholars have distinguished between qabūl [acceptance] and inqiyād [compliance], saying that acceptance relates to speech and belief, while compliance relates to action. Allah (تعالى) said: **And who is better in religion than one who submits himself to Allah while being a doer of good [4:125]**. And He said: **And whoever submits his face to Allah while he is a doer of good - then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold [31:22]**. For there may be someone who says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** yet refuses to comply with what it necessitates —namely, that judgment belongs to Allah alone and that legislation is the exclusive right of Allah alone. Instead, he assigns the right of legislation to the nation, makes the nation the source of authority, and thereby assigns legislative power to the parliament or others.

The Fifth Condition — Sidq [truthfulness]

The fifth condition is that a person should say it truthfully, and truthfulness is the opposite of lying. As for the one who utters it while lying, it will not benefit him. The one who says it falsely is the hypocrite. Therefore, a muslim must say it truthfully, intending thereby the Face of Allah (تعالى). He said: **And Allah will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars [29:3]**. And Allah (عز وجل) said: **And the one who has brought the truth and [they who] believed in it - those are the righteous [39:33]**. (Regarding this) Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنهما) said: "Whoever comes with ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***".

As for the hypocrites, they used to say it, but inwardly they were lying in their profession of it. Allah (تعالى) said: **When the hypocrites come to you, [O Muḥammad], they say, "We testify that you are the Messenger of Allah". And Allah knows that you are His Messenger, and Allah testifies that the hypocrites are liars [63:1]**. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr mentioned in his Tafsīr of Sūrat al-Munāfiqūn that ʿAbdullāh bin Ubayy bin Salūl, who was the head of hypocrisy, used to stand every Friday before the Prophet's ﷺ sermon and address the people, saying: "O people, Allah has honored you with the sending of this Prophet, so listen to him and obey him" [Tafsir ibn Kathir 4/557]. This was the head of hypocrisy. Then, when the day of Uḥud came and he withdrew with one-third of the army, he later attempted to repeat that statement, but the muslims pulled him back and restrained him saying: "Sit down, O wicked one," meaning that what this munāfiq [hypocrite] concealed within himself became exposed.

Therefore, many people say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** with their tongues, but their hearts refuse to comply with it. In reality, they are lying in it both outwardly and inwardly. They may be secularists, hypocrites, or belong to other communities of disbelief and movements of atheism. They only outwardly profess it out of fear of muslims, fear of being exposed, or in order to promote their man-made ideas, drawn from the intellectual rubbish of Western minds, among many of the ordinary and ignorant muslims.

The Sixth Condition — Ikhlās [sincerity]

The sixth condition is that a person should say it with sincerity, and the opposite of sincerity is shirk. Allah (تعالى) said: **So invoke Allah [being] sincere to Him in religion, although the disbelievers dislike it [40:14]**. **So worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion. Unquestionably, for Allah is the pure religion [39:2-3]**. Abu Hurairah asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, saying: "Who will be the happiest people with your intercession?" He replied: "The happiest people with my intercession are those who say: ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***

sincerely from their hearts" [Bukhari]. In the hadith Qudsi, Allah (تعالى) said: "I am the One most free of need of partners. Whoever performs an act in which he associates others with Me, I leave him and his association" [Muslim]. Sincerity means that worship is directed to Allah alone, without directing any part of it to anyone else besides Him (تعالى). It is the purification of deeds with righteous intention from all impurities of shirk —whether major or minor, apparent or hidden. This excludes the mushrikīn who say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** but circumambulate graves, worship them, sanctify their occupants, and they elevate and exalt them to the status of divinity.

The Seventh Condition — Maḥabbah [love]

The seventh condition is love, which is the opposite of its contrary: hatred and aversion. Thus, a muslim's should say it while loving it, loving Allah (تعالى) and His Messenger ﷺ. But if he says it while disliking it, hating what it indicates, or hating Allah or His Messenger, then that invalidates **the word of Tawḥīd**. Allah (تعالى) said: **Allah will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him [5:54]**. And Anas reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "There are three qualities; whoever possesses them will find the sweetness of imān: that Allah and His Messenger ﷺ are more beloved to him than anything else" [Bukhari & Muslim]. Some scholars have summarized these conditions in a line of poetry, saying:

علم يقين وإخلاص وصدقك مع

Knowledge, certainty, sincerity, and truthfulness along with

محبة وانقياد والقبول لها

Love, compliance, and acceptance of it

An additional Condition

Some scholars added an additional condition; disbelief in whatever is worshipped besides Allah —citing the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: "Whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and disbelieves in what is worshipped besides Allah, his wealth and his life are protected". In any case, whether this condition is added or omitted, the seven conditions already indicate it without doubt. For whoever says it with knowledge means that he knows that none should be worshipped except Allah (تبارك وتعالى) and that disbelief in *ṭāghūt* is necessary.

Some have said:

وزيد ثامنها الكفران منك بما

And an eighth is added; your rejection of whatever

سوى الإله من الأنداد قد ألها

Other than God, among the rivals that have been worshipped

When this becomes clear, and these conditions and the evidences mentioned regarding them are understood, the answer to that question becomes clear as well. It becomes evident that whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and then worships others besides Allah, through supplication, slaughter, or vows, or does not comply with the judgment of Allah and His Messenger, and applies man-made laws imported from Christians and Jews, then he is a mushrik committing major shirk, because he has invalidated what he has said. Thus, his statement does not benefit him. And knowledge is with Allah (تبارك وتعالى).

A refutation of the murji'ah who say that no sin harms imān

As for those who claim that merely saying ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** is sufficient —meaning that a person says it without nullifying it, then proceeds to commit sins and mubīqāt [major destructive acts], and nevertheless assumes salvation and immunity from punishment even if he abandons obligations and commits sins, using the aforementioned hadiths as evidence —the scholars have answered this in several ways. Among them is that the statement of Tawḥīd is a cause that necessitates entry into Paradise and salvation from Hellfire, but it has conditions, meaning for salvation, namely fulfilling the obligatory duties. It also has preventing factors, namely committing major sins. For this reason, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said to the poet al-Farazdaq when he met him in a graveyard: "O Abū Firās, what have you prepared for this day?" Al-Farazdaq replied: "***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, for eighty years". Al-Ḥasan said: "Indeed, ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** has conditions, so beware of slandering chaste women".

It is also reported from him that he said: "This is the pillar, but where is its supporting rope?" And it was said to him: "Some people say: whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** will enter Paradise". He (رحمه الله) replied: "Whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and fulfills its rights will enter Paradise". It was said to Wahb ibn Munabbih: "Is ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** not the key to Paradise?" He said: "Yes, but there is no key except that it has teeth. If you bring a key that has teeth, it will open for you; otherwise, it will not open for you". Others said: This, meaning the previous hadiths stating that whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** will enter Paradise, was before the obligatory duties were prescribed and before the ḥudūd [legal punishments] were legislated. Then, when the obligations were imposed and the ḥudūd [legal punishments] revealed, this either became abrogated, or additional conditions were attached to ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and added to it.

Thus, these became obligatory upon every Muslim, and a person would not attain salvation without them. Among those to whom this view has been attributed are the Imām Muḥammad ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri and the Imām Sufyān al-Thawri (رحمهم الله). Other scholars said: These hadiths stating that whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** will enter Paradise are mutlaqah [unrestricted] texts, but they are qualified by other texts indicating that a muslim must say it with truthfulness and sincerity. If he says it with truthfulness and sincerity, then that truthfulness and sincerity prevent him from insisting on sinning. Uttering it with complete sincerity and complete truthfulness purifies the heart from all stains and filth, that is; sins, and purifies from the heart the audacity to oppose the command of Allah and His Messenger. Thus, the servant becomes obedient to Allah (تبارك وتعالى). As for the one who says it yet indulges in sins, then his truthfulness is deficient and his sincerity is deficient, and he is following his desires. This is the soundest of the opinions, and knowledge is with Allah (تبارك وتعالى).

There is also an important matter here that must be noted: the revealed texts, that is; the Words of Allah and the words of His Messenger ﷺ, can never be contradictory. A muslim must reconcile them with one another, must believe in all of them, and must interpret the ambiguous texts in light of the clear ones, and the general texts in light of those that are detailed. The source of the error of the Khawārij and the Mu'tazilah is that they took the texts of warning and punishment while neglecting the texts of promise and reward. And the source of the error of the murji'ah is the opposite of that. Allah (عز وجل) guided the ahlus-sunnah, by His permission, to the truth concerning what they differed over. And Allah (عز وجل) guides whom He wills to a straight path.

Indeed the reports have reached tawatur [mass transmission], that some of the people of Tawḥīd will enter the Fire and then later be brought out of it. It is obligatory to believe in these texts and affirm what they indicate, and to hold that the major sinners among the muslims are under the will of the Lord (عز وجل):

If He wills, He pardons them and forgives them by His vast Grace and Mercy; and if He wills, He punishes them according to their sins in the Fire. However, they must eventually enter Paradise one day.

Those who oppose the word of Tawḥīd

So when the meaning of **the word of Tawḥīd**, the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, becomes clear to us, it also becomes clear that this word has enemies and opponents; meaning there are those who oppose what it indicates, and there are also enemies to it from its very foundation. Among these opponents are many groups, including the murji'ah, who say that whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** will enter Paradise no matter what he does. Thus, they made major sins easy for people and claimed that imān [faith] is only in the heart and that sin does not harm imān [faith]. This was a dangerous matter for the muslim ummah, as it caused great deviation and later led to weakness in imān [faith].

And these murji'ah are widespread in many muslim lands. They trivialize sins and make them seem easy. We find one of them saying, when he is advised or warned against wrongdoing, "imān [faith] is in the heart, and what matters is conscience". Yes, the heart is indeed the most important, without doubt. As the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Truly, in the body there is a morsel; if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt. Verily, it is the heart" [Bukhari & Muslim]. However, when the heart is sound, the limbs become sound, behavior becomes sound, character becomes sound, and worship becomes sound. But to claim that imān [faith] exists in the heart while there is no worship and no righteous behavior —this is merely wishful thinking and it is not true. It is nothing but a satanic deception.

The influence of murji' thought upon muslims is indeed great, to the point that it has made it easy for some people to commit acts of disbelief, while claiming that such acts do not contradict imān [faith]. Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him

we shall return. Among those who also oppose it are those who had a severely negative influence on the muslim ummah —they are *ahl al-kalām* (who use logic in matters of ʻaqīdah) such as the ash'ariyyah, māturidiyyah and others. They claimed that the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** is that there is no creator except Allah, no originator except Allah, and no one capable of bringing things into existence except Allah. Thus, they interpreted it in terms of Rubūbiyyah [Lordship]. According to them, whoever says ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** while believing that there is no creator except Allah and no originator except Allah has perfected his Tawḥīd. Therefore, if he does something that contradicts Ulūhiyyah [Worship of Allah], this does not harm him according to many of them.

This has been a cause of error for many people, to the extent that some who are regarded as people of knowledge worship graves, approve of those who worship them, or remain silent about such practices, claiming that these people are believers and muwaḥidīn because they say ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***. If you ask them, "Who is the Creator?" they answer "Allah" —therefore, in their view, such people are believers. We have already explained that this was not something disputed even by Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab, or other than them, and that the Messengers were only sent so that Allah alone would be worshipped without any partner: **And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid ṭāghūt". And among them were those whom Allah guided, and among them were those upon whom error was [deservedly] decreed [16:36]**.

Among those who also oppose **the word of Tawḥīd**, the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, are the extremist Sufis, who have been one of the causes of misguidance for a large segment of those who identify with the qiblah (the muslims). These extremists are the ones who made it seem attractive to people to seek tawassul through the righteous, seek their intercession, remain devoted at their graves, draw near to them, seek blessings by touching the graves, and invoke them. They claimed that this was merely honoring the righteous and honoring the Prophets, and that such figures intercede with Allah —this is the very same form of shirk practiced by

the people of jāhiliyyah [pre-islamic ignorance] who lived during the time of the Prophet ﷺ. These people, in reality, do not merely oppose **the word of Tawḥīd**; rather, they nullify it outright.

Likewise, the Rāfiḍah, who are among the people most attached to graves and to those buried in them, especially their imams whom they venerate. Thus, you find that the Rāfiḍah believe that visiting the graves of their Imams is greater than visiting the Kaʿbah and the Sacred House. You also find that they write books describing the manner of visiting them, and some of them have even authored books on the rites of pilgrimage to shrines, calling it a "ḥajj" in defiance to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

And among those who nullify **the word of Tawḥīd** are the secularists and the hypocrites who lie in wait against islam and seek to destroy it from within. They write books and articles calling for the application of man-made laws and referring back to them, promoting irreligion and secularism, and attacking the religion of Allah (تبارك وتعالى), or His Messenger ﷺ, or His verses (سبحانه). As well as defaming the people of imān [faith] and insulting them with various labels, while they do not intend the individuals themselves, but rather the principles held by the people of imān [faith]. Otherwise, individuals come and go, and individuals are many. It is well known that a person does not fight another person merely because of his person, but rather he fights him for other matters beyond that person, whether beliefs or otherwise.

The reality of the muslim ummah with regards to the word of Tawḥīd

The reality of the muslim ummah with ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** is a regrettable one. Few people know its meaning and act according to what it requires, while the greater portion of the muslim ummah falls short regarding the meaning of **the**

word of Tawḥīd and in knowing it, and is ignorant of its requirements. This is either because they do things that nullify it or because they do things that diminish it and weaken it in the heart. Therefore, it is the duty of muslims everywhere to work toward spreading **the word of Tawḥīd**, clarifying it, correcting misunderstandings about it, and explaining that it is a general and comprehensive word that includes beliefs, dealings, acts of worship, morals, guidance, conduct, politics, governance, economics, education, upbringing, society, media, and in everything. It is general and comprehensive, covering every sphere. Whoever is a muslim then it is upon him to humble himself to Allah alone: **So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part? Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent back to the severest of punishment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do [2:85]**.

The statements of Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) has a profound and firmly grounded statement with which I will conclude this blessed discussion concerning the meaning of ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and its comprehensiveness. This is because the need to correct muslims' understandings is urgent, foremost among them the understanding of Tawḥīd and the understanding of the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***. This is for the purpose of reviving the pure and unadulterated islamic identity, one that is not influenced by the disbelievers —whether Christians, Jews, or others.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said in *At-Tadmūriyyah*:

(Begin quote) The foundation of islam in an absolute sense is the testimony that ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***. With it Allah sent all the Messengers. *(End quote)*.

And he (رحمه الله) said in *Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā*:

(Begin quote) All the Messengers called people to worship Allah alone, without partner. This is the religion of Allah with which He sent down His Books and sent His Messengers. It is the general islam, other than which Allah accepts from neither the earlier nor the later peoples. **Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam [3:19]. And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers [3:85]**. *(End quote)*

He also says in *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*:

(Begin quote) Allah (تعالى) says: **So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone" [18:110]**. And 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) used to say in his supplication: "O Allah, make all of my deeds righteous, make them purely for Your Sake, and do not let any part of them be for anyone else". (...) These two foundations are the realization of the two testimonies, which are the head of islam: the testimony that ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh*** and the testimony that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah. For bearing witness to Allah that there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, entails devoting worship exclusively to Him. Therefore, the heart must not take anyone besides Him as a deity through love, fear, hope, reverence, exaltation, *raghbah*, or *rahbah*. Rather, the entire religion must be for Allah alone. If part of the religion is for Allah and part of it is for someone else, then there is shirk in it to the extent of that.

And the testimony that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah entails believing him in everything he informed of and obeying him in everything he commanded. Whatever he affirmed then it must be affirmed, and whatever he negated then it must be negated. Likewise it is obligatory upon people to affirm for Allah whatever the Messenger affirmed for his Lord of the Names and Attributes, and to deny from Him whatever he denied of resemblance to creation. (...) They must do what Allah has commanded them to do and refrain from what He has forbidden them

from. They must regard as lawful what He has made lawful and regard as unlawful what He has made unlawful. There is no prohibition except what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited, and there is no religion except what Allah and His Messenger have legislated. For this reason, Allah condemned the mushrikīn in Sūrat al-Anʿām, Sūrat al-Aʿrāf, and elsewhere because they made unlawful what Allah had not made unlawful and because they legislated a religion for which Allah had given no permission. (...)

Whoever invites to other than Allah has committed shirk, and whoever invites to Allah without His permission, that is; through an invented shar' [legislation], has committed a bid'ah [innovation]. Shirk is an innovation, and the innovator ultimately ends up in shirk. (...) There is no innovator except that there is in him some form of shirk —as Allah (تعالى) said: **They have taken their scholars and monks as lords besides Allah , and [also] the Messiah, the son of Mary. And they were not commanded except to worship one God; there is no deity except Him. Exalted is He above whatever they associate with Him [9:31]**. And part of their shirk was that they made lawful for them what was unlawful, so they obeyed them, and they made unlawful for them what was lawful so they obeyed them. Allah (تعالى) said: **Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled [9:29]**.

Thus, He coupled their lack of imān [faith] in Allah and the Last Day with the fact that they do not forbid what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden and do not follow the religion of truth. As for the believers, they affirmed the truthfulness of what the Messenger conveyed about Allah and about the Last Day, so they believed in Allah and the Last Day and obeyed him in what he commanded and forbade, and in what he declared lawful and unlawful. Thus, they forbade what Allah and His Messenger forbade and followed the religion of truth.

Indeed, Allah sent the Messenger commanding them with ma'ruf [good] and forbidding them from munkar [evil], making lawful for them the tayyibāt [good things] and making unlawful for them the khabā'ith [evil things]. So he commanded them with every ma'ruf [good], forbade them from every munkar [evil], made lawful for them every tayyib [good thing], and made unlawful for them every khabith [evil thing].

The term "islam" includes submission and compliance, and it includes sincerity, as indicated by the saying of Allah (تعالى): **Allah presents an example: a slave owned by quarreling partners and another belonging exclusively to one man [39:29]**. Therefore, in islam there must be submission to Allah alone and abandoning submission to anything besides Him. This is the reality of our statement ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***. Whoever submits to Allah and to other than Allah, then he is a mushrik, and Allah does not forgive shirk. And whoever does not submit to Allah is arrogant toward His worship. Allah (تعالى) has said: **Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible [40:60]**. *(End of quote).*

And I would like to say: Allah (تعالى) said in His Book: **O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Satan [2:208]**. And the meaning of *submission* here is islam, meaning: enter into islam completely, in full and in detail, and do not differentiate between one part of it and another. I conclude this discussion by saying: The eminent scholar Muḥammad Quṭb authored a book about the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***, in which he clarified its meaning, and this was among his last written works. It is fitting for a muslim to refer to it and read it, as it is a valuable book.

I ask Allah (تعالى) by His Most Beautiful Names and His Lofty Attributes, to grant us correct knowledge of the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh,*** to grant us success in acting according to what it requires, and to make us among those who call to it and

strive for its sake. We ask Him (سبحانه) to rectify the affairs of the muslim ummah, to return it to Him in a beautiful manner, to guide it to what is right in its affairs, and to facilitate the correction of all misconceptions among the ummah especially the understanding of **the word of Tawḥīd**, the word ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh***.

We ask Him (سبحانه), The All-Strong, The Almighty, The One, The Subduer, to grant victory to His religion, to elevate His word, to honor His believing allies, and to grant them establishment in the land, and to humiliate His enemies, the enemies of His religion, to forsake them, and to show us in them the wonders of His power. O Allah, intensify Your punishment upon them, remove Your protection from them. O Allah, place a barrier between them and what they desire, and show them to the believers what they fear. Indeed, You are over all things Capable, and worthy of answering (supplications). May Allah send His blessings, peace, and grace upon His servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his companions and grant them all peace. And all praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.